

Caregiver Programs

The Arizona Family Caregiver Support Program

The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 established a National Family Caregiver Support Program. Arizona received an allocation of \$1.9 million to implement the Arizona Family Caregiver Support Program. The program calls for all states, working in partnership with Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and local community-service providers to have five basic services for family caregivers, including:

- Information to caregivers about available services;
- Assistance to caregivers in gaining access to supportive services;
- Individual counseling, organization of support groups, and caregiver training to caregivers to assist the caregivers in making decisions and solving problems relating to their caregiving roles;
- Respite care to enable caregivers to be temporarily relieved from their caregiving responsibilities; and
- Supplemental services, on a limited basis, to complement the care provided by caregivers.

Services are to be provided to (1) family caregivers of older adults and (2) grandparents and other relative caregivers of children not more than 18 years of age. The statute requires states to give priority consideration to: 1) persons in greatest social and economic need (with particular attention to low-income, minority individuals); and 2) older individuals providing care and support to persons with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities.

Arizona Relatives As Parents Program

The Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP) is a Statewide Initiative aimed at serving Kin Caregivers. RAPP has three primary objectives: 1) to facilitate the development of five new relatives as parents support groups; 2) to expand the statewide RAPP network; and 3) to enhance the participation in the RAPP statewide task force. The RAPP initiative is funded through the Brookdale Foundation Group and is implemented through the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Aging and Adult Administration (A&AA).

The A&AA has contracted with the Beatitudes Center D.O.A.R. (Developing Older Adult Resources) to issue mini-grants in an effort to encourage and enable the

development of local relatives as parents support groups. Two support groups have been initiated under the sponsorship and support of local agencies in different parts of the state. The first support group, the West Valley Grandparents Support Group, began in April 2001 and meets twice a month. The meetings are conducted in Spanish and English and facilitated by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Services and the Beatitudes Center D.O.A.R. Meetings are held at the Isaac School District, where approximately 20 grandparents attend the meetings, the majority of whom are Hispanic. The second support group is facilitated by the Tohono O'Odham Agriculture Extension Program in Sells, Arizona and meets every third Thursday of the month. This support group serves the Tohono O'Odham Reservation and the surrounding communities. Approximately six to eight young grandmothers (in their 40's) attend the meetings.

The A&AA is also a member of the Grandparents' Concerns Task Force (GCTF), formed by the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging in June of 1997 in response to concerns surrounding grandparents as the primary caregivers of their grandchildren. GCTF is co-sponsored by the Beatitudes Center D.O.A.R. The membership consists of the A&AA, Area Agency on Aging - Region One, Grandparents United for Children's Rights, Pima County Cooperative Extension, Tohono O'Odham Agriculture Extension, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Services, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, Parents Anonymous, Las Salas After School Program, and the Tempe Elementary School District. A primary focus of the task force is to plan, prepare, and conduct the annual Grandparent's University. Sixty grandparents attended the 2nd Annual University was held on November 4, 2000 in Phoenix. Topics included dealing with young at-risk children with attachment problems, legal issues for grandparents, depression in youth, and grandparent-child relationships – learning to communicate.

During the 2000 legislative session, the Arizona Legislature passed House Bill 2400 and Senate Bill 1290, which established kinship care and foster kinship care. The legislation was passed in late April 2000 and officially signed into legislation on August 24, 2000. The A&AA is a member of the Kinship Care Work Group which was established to collaborate in the development of a comprehensive plan for kinship care and kinship foster care pilot projects in Arizona. The Department of Economic Security (DES) held kinship forums and focus groups to elicit input for the comprehensive plan. Relative and foster care parents, community advocacy groups, legislative officials, and DES staff responsible to implement the program were invited to attend. South Tucson and South Phoenix were chosen as pilot sites for kinship care, providing special consideration to nonparent specified relatives who are supporting children who cannot live with the children's parents and are not under the jurisdiction of the Administration for Children Youth and Families. Assistance may be provided in

the form of cash assistance (average monthly payment of \$135.09 for children under kinship care), food stamps, or medical coverage for the child. Although two pilot sites are implementing the kinship care and kinship foster care program, the respective policy has been implemented statewide.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Are Really Extraordinary (CARE) Program

Arizona is one of sixteen states to participate in the second phase of the Administration on Aging Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Grants to States. The Aging and Adult Administration awarded the Area Agency on Aging, Region One, a contract in June 2001 to implement the Alzheimer's CARE program and provide direct services. The Arizona Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association is a partner with the Area Agency on Aging, Region One, Inc. to administer needs assessment, provide care management, and deliver professional and family caregiver training. The purpose of the program is to provide education, outreach, and direct services to the underserved Hispanic population in outlying areas of Maricopa County and the Native American population in the rural communities of northern Arizona. The primary objectives of the program are 1) to expand and develop culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate material for caregivers, 2) increase community awareness, and 3) increase the availability and use of respite.